

# SOCIAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

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## NEGRO RURAL PASTORS MEET AT JARVIS COLLEGE

The first interdenominational Negro rural pastor's conference ever held in the Southwest, met at Jarvis Christian College, Hawkins, Texas, April 19 to 24, 1943. Sponsored jointly by Jarvis College and the National Home Missions Council, representing 23 different denominations. The institute brought together Negro ministers of many denominations for five days of study, discussion, and conference concerning the problems of the Negro church and of the Negro people. The theme was -The Responsibility of the Church for a Better Rural Life.

President Peter C. Washington was host to the gathering and Professor W. O. Gill served as dean of the conference. Dr. Ralph A. Felton, professor of rural religion in Drew Theological Seminary and chairman of the commission on share-cropper work of the Home Missions Council, taught courses on rural life and the program of the rural church. Mr. Ralph Worley, white supervisor of Negro education of the state department of education of Texas, led discussions for two days regarding the conditions of Negro people and Negro education in Texas. He presented facts and figures showing the relation of soil erosion to crop yield, cost of producing crops, annual return for labor, standards of living and health. He urged that Negro churches take the lead in promoting better homes, gardens, better food supplies, better farming practices, and cooperative marketing and buying. The pastors were so enthusiastic over Mr. Worley's presentations that additional time had to be given for the group. Mrs. Emmett Dixon, professor of home economics in Jarvis demonstrated to the group how numerous useful and ornamental objects for the home can be made from cardboard, orange crates, feed sacks, gunny sacks, tin cans, and discarded jars and bottles. Mr. James A. Crain gave the evening inspirational messages, assisted by the Jarvis choir. Mr. Willard M. Wickizer, executive secretary of the department of evangelism and church development of The United Christian Missionary Society was also present and participated in the conference.

The Jarvis meeting was one of fifteen regional conferences which will enroll approximately 1000 Southern Negro ministers during the spring and summer. In addition, twenty-eight other conferences under the direction of the Home Missions Council will reach 3000 ministers in other parts of the nation. It is hoped that as a result of the Jarvis conference a permanent program of interdenominational Negro work can be developed in the Southwest.

## SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR RURAL PASTORS

Garrett Biblical Institute, Northwestern University Campus, Evanston, Illinois, has generously provided three scholarships in its Interdenominational School for Rural Leaders for rural ministers among the Disciples of Christ who can qualify. The school is under the direction of Professor Rockwell C. Smith. Courses will be offered covering such phases of rural church work, as agricultural economics, sociology, the program of the rural church, recreational activities, research in rural life, etc. The school opens on June 14. and will close on July 16. Classes will be held Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, to enable rural ministers in service to return to their pulpits each week end. The scholarship is valued at \$35.00 and covers everything except board, which is estimated at \$30.00 for the five weeks. To qualify the applicant must be a college graduate, preferably with a seminary degree, be actively engaged in or preparing for the rural ministry, and must agree to use the knowledge gained in developing not only his own church but also the community. Certain courses are also available in the regular Garrett Summer School at no additional cost. Credit earned may be transferred to other schools to apply on degrees. For further information write to James A. Crain, executive secretary, department of social welfare and rural work, The United Christian Missionary Society, Missions Building, 222 Downey Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana.

In addition to the above, summer schools and institutes for rural pastors and leaders will be held at the University of Wisconsin, Washington State College, Pullman, the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, Faribault Summer School, Faribault, Minnesota, Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, the College of Agriculture, Lincoln, Nebraska, Penn State, State College, Pennsylvania, New Jersey College of Agriculture, Brunswick, New Jersey, Vanderbilt School of Religion, Nashville, Tennessee.

Other opportunities for in-service training for rural ministers and church leaders are available through conferences and institutes offered by various denominational and interdenominational rural life commission. Courses offered cover almost the whole field of rural life. Expenses are kept at the lowest possible figure. In many instances scholarships or other aid is available to qualified applicants. Write The Town and Country Church Committee, Home Missions Council, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York, New York, for free bulletin.



Under the above title Frances Carr Stifler writes in the American Bible Society Record of the needs of the people of Mississippi County, Arkansas and of the work of the Rev. V. E. Hartman, who spent 12 weeks in the county surveying its needs for the Society.

"Mississippi County is the greatest cotton-growing county in America. Every fall in its county-seat of Blytheville the National Cotton Picking Contest is held. In the summer of 1941 the county produced 237,000 bales, the magnificent crop standing higher in July than a tall man's head for as far as the eye could see. It is a county of large plantations - the largest covering 59,000 acres. The plantations are covered by small sharecropper homes, usually of two rooms and always unpainted. The people are nearly all white. The average farm is from 12 to 25 acres. One can see row upon row of these homes about 300 yards apart all over the county. One observer describes what he saw in these words, 'I think it is the richest land in the world, and supports the poorest people in the world that are to be found in this country.'

"Into this county the American Bible Society, in cooperation with the Home Mission Council, sent last summer Rev. Vladimir E. Hartman to survey and meet the Bible needs of the people.... Mr. Hartman spent 12 weeks in Mississippi County, during which he drove his car more than 3000 miles, visiting over 1500 homes. He writes,

"'Since this section is part of the Bible Belt, I was assured by man, before I began my work that every home would have a Bible. This was not true. There were dozens of homes where the people had no Bible at all. Most of the homes I visited had large families, and the children did not have Testaments and Bibles of their own.'

"Some idea of the extent of the need is revealed by the fact that in the 1500 homes visited, Mr. Hartman distributed 100 Bibles, 550 New Testaments, and hundreds of one- and two-cent Gospel portions. These books were either sold at the cost price or less, or were given away if the people had no money. Mr. Hartman never left a home without making it possible for the people to have a Bible or a Testament if they did not have one...."

Cropping out between the lines of this story of a Bible Society colporteur is another story that helps to understand the conditions the colporteur found. Here is the richest land in the world - formed by the rich soil deposits brought down by a mighty river that drained away the meltage of a prehistoric icecap that once covered the continent as far south as central-southern Indiana and continually enriched by the silt brought down from the Dakotas, Minnesota, and the areas of its immense tributaries reaching as far west as Colorado and Montana and as far east as the Allegheny mountains. A soil unbelievably rich and a people unbelievably poor. Bare, unpainted houses without a well or garden or a cow or a pig. The land is in the hands of individual or corporation plantation owners who exploit these landless, hopeless sharecroppers for their own profit.

Congressman Louis Ludlow, of the 12th Indiana District, on March 8, 1943, introduced in the House of Representatives a Joint Resolution to create a committee on peace aims to "prepare a clear, definite statement of what the United Nations are fighting for and the peace aims which they will faithfully execute when victory comes to Allied arms." The text of the resolution is as follows:

"Be it resolved, etc., That a committee on peace aims is hereby created, to be composed as follows: Three members to be chosen by the Vice-President; three members of the House to be chosen by the Speaker and six members at large to be chosen by the President. Of the six members to be chosen by the President, one shall be a woman, one shall be a member of the Federal Council of Churches (of Christ) in America, one shall be a representative of the Catholic Churches of America, one shall be a member of the Jewish religion, and the other shall be a member of the State Department trained in the field of foreign service.

Sec.2. This committee shall prepare a clear, definite statement of what the United Nations are fighting for and the peace aims which they will faithfully execute when victory comes to Allied arms.

Sec.3. When this statement is completed the Secretary of State shall transmit the text thereof to the Governments of Great Britain and British Dominions, Russia, and China. If these governments consent to become signatories no further negotiations will be required and the statement will be regarded as a finished document expressing the views and purposes of all the United Nations. The statement shall also be transmitted to friendly governments under Axis subjugations, whose adherence may be desired.

Sec.4. If any one of the United Nations dissents to the statement or any of its provisions, the President shall invite the governments of these United Nations to send delegates to a conference to be held in the city of Washington to compose existing differences and agree on a modified statement which all can sign.

Sec.5. When the statement is completed and approved it shall be promulgated as an official declaration stating the United Nations' peace aims and copies of it shall be widely distributed throughout the world."

Congressman Ludlow has long been known as one of the most ardent advocates of international peace and world order in Congress. In a letter to the editor of Social Action Newsletter, he writes, "I have a deep conviction that our Christian forces should be mobilizing to assist in giving the world a better understanding of the altruistic peace aims of the United Nations. I believe that it would be possible to make an authoritative of peace aims with such force and effect that it would hasten the crumbling of enemy resistance through the strength of its appeal to the enslaved peoples of totalitarian countries.... Should we not be up and doing?"

Mr. Ludlow would appreciate letters from all who approve of the purposes of his resolution. He can be addressed, Hon. Louis Ludlow, House Office Building, Washington, D.C.



On March 4, Rep. Joseph R. Bryson, of North Carolina, introduced H.R. 2082, under the title of "A Bill to reduce absenteeism, conserve manpower, and speed production of materials necessary for the winning of the war." The Bill proposes to prohibit the manufacture and sale, exportation and importation of alcoholic beverages for the duration of the war and for the period of demobilization thereafter. The Bill was referred to the House Judiciary Committee. Persons desiring a copy of the Bill should address Mr. Bryson at the House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

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On April 14, 1943, Dr. W. Harry Jellema, head of the department of philosophy of Indiana University, addressing a dinner meeting of the Indianapolis Bar Association, declared, "We have lost a great deal of the perspective of moral rights and this has caused Hitler and other undemocratic thinkers to declare that our democracy is merely a system that permits the individual to get out of society whatever he can get away with, that democracy is just sheer materialism that leads, in the end, to despotism." Dr. Jellema urged the rekindling of morality as the remedy.

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Vacation employment of minors in war industries in Indiana may show a 500% increase this year, is the warning of Mrs. Mary Garner, director of the Ind. Bureau of Women & Children in the Labor Division of the Dept. of Public Welfare. Indianapolis schools are issuing employment permits at the rate of 50 a day. A recent legislative act permits 15 year-old girls to work till 10 p.m. and many girls are taking advantage of it to work in places where late hours are kept. Juvenile delinquency is increasing by leaps and bounds in the state; police, court, and welfare authorities are alarmed.

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Paralleling the above, the Indiana Council of Women, in annual meeting at Indianapolis on April 15, passed a resolution deploring the increase in juvenile delinquency, offered to assume personal responsibility with fathers and mothers to see that children are properly cared for, and recommended revival of the old curfew law which some Indiana communities have instituted. The Indianapolis News recently assigned a crack reporter to investigate juvenile delinquency and give publicity to the facts through the columns of the paper. His investigations showed that boys and girls of high school age are frequenting resorts as late as 2 a.m., and that 'reefers' or marihuana cigarettes are being freely sold among them.

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The Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., has developed a plan for "Community Action for Children in War-Time," covering (1) plans for a baby clinic in every community, (2) suggestions for the care of children of employed mothers, (3) how to have school lunches in every school, (4) the necessity for schooling for every child, (5) play and recreation programs for every community, and (6) employment safeguards for every boy and girl. Copies of the document can be obtained free from the Children's Bureau. Every church concerned about the effect of the war on family and child life should send for this document and use it as the basis of a study course looking toward positive action in the community.

That the Union Nacional Sinarquista, (Sinarchists) is in reality "a native fascist group based on Spanish Falangist principles" is bluntly charged by Mexican Labor News, a mimeographed news service published by the leftist "Workers University of Mexico." The Sinarchists, who number a solid core of some 2000 members, with perhaps a total membership of 500,000, are committed to "A New Christian Order in Mexico," opposition to liberal democracy and communism. According to Mexican Labor News, the movement seeks to overthrow the present government of Mexico and substitute one on the Franco order, supported by the Catholic Church, with education, the right of free press, and governmental powers limited to Sinarchists. It is also charged that the movement is characterized by typical fascist 'strong-arm' squads to discipline members who may talk too much or who wish to leave the organization. In some instances, it is alleged, these squads have been responsible for the death of school teachers who do not agree that education should be controlled by the Church.

According to available information, the Union Nacional Sinarquista was formed in 1937 by two Nazi agents, Oskar Hellmuth Schrieter and Friedrich Wilhelm Heim, first as an 'anti-Communist league,' which later adopted the Sinarchist name, remodeling the organization along the line of the Spanish Falangists. It is said that the organization has penetrated both Central America and the Mexican population of the United States, having about 50,000 members in California, New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas. There are said to be approximately 23,000 members in Central America, chiefly in Guatemala. The Sinarchist organization is said to have an aristocratic front, called Accion Nacional, whose membership is limited to persons of power and influence, while the larger organization recruits mostly the uneducated and superstitious. Quoting Mexican Labor News, "The Axis tie-up is assumed to run from the Nazi Ibero-American Institute to the Spanish Falange, thence to Accion Nacional and the Sinarchist group. However, no exact documentary proof of this connection exists. Sinarchist penetration of the Catholic Church, aided by its 'Christian Order' slogan, has made Mexican authorities leery of prosecution without black-and-white proof, lest their actions be interpreted as 'religious persecution.'" However, numerous Sinarchists have lately been arrested on charges of treason and inciting to revolt after risings in various parts of Mexico, ostensibly in protest against the draft.

One of the projects of the Sinarchist group was the establishment of a colony in Lower California near the strategic Magdalena Bay. It is charged that the real purpose of the colony was to prepare the way for a Japanese attack on the United States up to the entry of Mexico into the war the Sinarchists had openly favored the Axis. Since the declaration of war however, the organization has gone partly under ground, leaving an above-ground front group to carry on a cautious pro-Axis program. While the statements are not subject to documentary proof at this time, the program fits in with the known facts about Nazi propaganda and sabotage methods.



What sort of persons are the 60-odd young men of the church of the Disciples of Christ who are in Civilian Public Service Camps doing "work of national importance under civilian direction" instead of military service? What sort of philosophy of life do they and the more than 6000 others hold? The following extract from a letter from one of them so completely pictures the attitudes, hopes, and aspirations of the group that we have asked permission to print it. The writer is a member of one of our larger churches; he has served as co-chairman of the Christian Youth Fellowship of his state, as president of the state Christian Youth Council, and chairman of the youth Round Table of Christians and Jews in one of the larger metropolitan cities. He has been active in politics in his state, having served as a member of the county and state young Democratic League. Before entering C.P.S. he was deputy County Recorder of his county, which contains the metropolis mentioned above. The excerpt is as follows:

"If I cannot serve in the field I chose I am quite willing to do the most dangerous and insignificant work so long as it aids the process of building a better world. I was home on furlough recently and attended church. A service flag with stars representing 150 men in the armed forces was on display and it would have appeared quite ordinary for these times if it had contained only the traditional blue stars. But along with the blue there appeared two gold stars. These two gold stars meant that two young men of my church had given their lives for their country in war. I asked myself if I was ready to give my life for peace; for Christianity. My mind turned toward the usual complacent Sunday congregation. I wondered how many would give their lives for Christ. Or even a job, or a day's work. I have asked myself this question over and over again and have searched the faces and hearts of my acquaintances and friends for some sign that we as Christians were ready to risk our physical and spiritual lives for the Kingdom.

"I have come to the conclusion that the Kingdom of God will be built by volunteers and not conscripts. God will not recruit an army to beat down the forces of evil but will rely upon the willingness of His children to die without killing, even as Jesus did. The volunteer will have to capture the spirit of Jesus that let Him die gladly without letting even the thought of retaliation enter his heart. As I continued to gaze up at those two gold stars I could not help but conclude that if we could match the forces of the state with two gold stars for peace or Christianity, we could revolutionize the world as first century pioneers of the Gospel did. We could change this world for good beyond recognition. I dreamed for a moment of that great theme of millions of Christian young people across the world, 'Build Today for a Christian World.' I think we should match the boys in the army. A Gold Star life dedicated to peace in every congregation across the world may make the difference between the decline of civilization and the building of a new post-war world."

Contributions to the Conscientious Objector Fund help to make a Christian witness like this possible.

An indication of what is happening to religion in Spain under the Franco regime is revealed by an Associated Press dispatch from Madrid dated April 8, 1943, giving the text of the oath of allegiance which all bishops of the Spanish church are required to take under the terms of an accord signed by the Vatican on June 7, 1941. While the bishops of the Catholic Church in Germany are struggling to preserve the liberty of the Church from the encroachments of the Nazi government, the Vatican signs an agreement with Franco which wipes out the gains of centuries and makes the bishops of the Spanish church as completely dependent upon Franco as the German bishops would be on Hitler were the Nazi demands to be accepted.

The text of the oath, as cabled to this country by the reliable Associated Press, is as follows:

"Before God and the Holy Gospel, I swear and promise as befits a bishop, fidelity to the Spanish state.

"I swear and promise to respect and make my clergy respect the chief of the Spanish state and the government established according to Spanish laws.

"I swear and promise moreover to take no part in any agreement nor to take part in any meeting which may prejudice the Spanish state and public order, and I will make my clergy observe similar conduct.

"Occupying myself with the welfare and interest of the Spanish state I will endeavor to avoid all evils which may threaten it."

The first fact that will strike the intelligent reader is the absolute and unconditioned allegiance which the bishop is required to give to the Spanish state and its dictator head. Not one word is said about his obligation to God. Nor is there the slightest recognition that he has any duty higher than his duty to the state. Roman Catholics through the ages have fought to maintain the independence of the Church against the encroachments of ambitious rulers. Many of them died rather than say, "Caesar is lord." But in Spain the bishops must henceforth say, "Franco is lord!" without even a qualifying phrase to permit prior allegiance to God - or even the Vatican. What are our Catholic friends in America who with one breath shout for democracy and with the next plead for the Franco regime going to say to that?

The oath becomes more absurd than ever when it requires the bishop to "respect the chief of the Spanish state and the government established according to Spanish laws." Franco is 'chief of the Spanish state' by exactly the same means that Quisling is 'chief' of the Norwegian state. To pretend that his government was 'established by Spanish laws' is ludicrous. And for the man who pretends to be the 'Vicar of Christ on Earth' to sign a concord at that puts the bishops of the Church at the mercy of such a regime is to compound a fraud on the Christian religion. "What concord hath Christ with Beliel?"

American Protestants welcome the growing spirit of understanding and fraternity between Protestants & Catholics here, but some of the political moves of the Vatican put goodwill to a severe strain.